

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 244914

12

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INFO OCT-01 EUR-08 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY LONDON

INFO AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

AMEMBASSY SAIGON

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 244914

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PDIP, PFOR, CB, UK

SUBJECT: UK DIPLOMATIC REPRESENTATION IN PHNOM PENH

REFS: A. PHNOM PENH 14817; B. LONDON 14262

1. COUNSELOR OF UK EMBASSY CALLED ON ASSISTANT SECRETARY HABIB NOVEMBER 6 AND INFORMED HIM OF HMG'S PLAN TO REPLACE AMBASSADOR IN PHNOM PENH BY A NON-RESIDENT AMBASSADOR. THIS HAD BEEN MENTIONED BY MICHAEL WILFORD DURING US-UK TALKS IN OCTOBER. CHANGE OF STATUS OF REPRESENTATION HAS BEEN LONG PLANNED BECAUSE OF FUNDING RESTRICTIONS.

2. IN COURSE OF CONVERSATION, COUNSELOR STATED THAT UK AMBASSADOR IN PHNOM PENH DUE FOR REASSIGNMENT, PROBABLY IN DECEMBER. HE WILL EVENTUALLY BE REPLACED BY ACCREDITATION OF UK AMBASSADOR RESIDENT IN SAIGON. MEANWHILE, NUMBER TWO POSITION IN PHNOM PENH EMBASSY WILL BE UPGRADED
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PAGE 02 STATE 244914

TO RANK OF COUNSELOR WHO WILL BE CHARGE. COUNSELOR ALSO-

POINTED OUT THAT WHEN AMBASSADOR INFORMS GKR OF HIS DEPARTURE, HE WILL ALSO STATE THAT HE WILL BE REPLACED BY AN AMBASSADOR. HOWEVER, HE WILL NOT RPT NOT NECESSARILY TELL GKR WHO HIS REPLACEMENT WILL BE OR WHERE HE WILL RESIDE.

3. IN RESPONSE, HABIB STATED THAT, WHILE WE PREFERRED NO

CHANGE OCCUR AND ASSUMING HMG NOT PREPARED REVERSE DECISION, TIMING OF UK AMBASSADOR'S DEPARTURE WAS IMPORTANT. IF IT OCCURRED AFTER A WINNING VOTE AT THE UNGA, TIMING WOULD NOT BE AS TROUBLESOME. HOWEVER, IF UNGA VOTE IS LOST, IT WOULD BE IMPORTANT TO POSTPONE AMBASSADOR'S DEPARTURE IN ORDER THAT IT NOT BE INTERPRETED AS UK RESPONSE TO SUCH A VOTE. HABIB ALSO URGED THAT THE GKR NOT RPT NOT BE TOLD OF AMBASSADOR'S IMPENDING DEPARTURE UNTIL AFTER UNGA VOTE. HE ALSO APPROVED OF WITHHOLDING NAME AND LOCATION OF NEXT AMBASSADOR AS LONG AS POSSIBLE IN EITHER CASE. INGERSOLL

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